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Approved For Release 2003/05/23 : CIA-RDP80R01731R003300180037-1

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ER-2-8345

24 April 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : The Significance of the Communist Build-UP
in North Korea

1. Pursuant to your request, I am submitting to you herewith a condensed summary of the points which you said you might raise as a part of your conversation with the other members of the PSB concerning the significance of the build-up of military strength in North Korea.

2. At last Monday's meeting of the POGB General Balmer raised, and I supported, the proposition that the build-up of military strength in North Korea has many ominous connotations and that immediate consideration should be given to the psychological aspects of this matter. Public and Congressional opinion in the United States and public and official opinion in other parts of the free world is totally unprepared for what might happen. If the Communists were to launch an offensive in Korea, the free world would be caught with its psychological pants around its ankles and there would be a confused but loud hue and cry raised everywhere that the responsible UN authorities had either been purposely withholding the facts or had been blind to them. Among other things, there would be loud charges of "another catastrophic failure of intelligence." Moreover, if the Commies do start something, they will be sure to represent it as a defensive action -- just as they did in connection with the original attack.

3. I took the position that these factors pointed to the desirability of a stepped-up effort to call attention to the military build-up in North Korea that we know is going on. We should not, at this time, draw conclusions from the facts but simply let the facts speak for themselves. In this way public and official opinion will be shaken out of the lethargy into which it has fallen, and a solid foundation will be laid for placing the blame where it belongs.

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4. In the ensuing discussion, various reservations were expressed to this proposition -- some of them entirely reasonable. For example, everyone agreed that General Ridgway's views should be obtained concerning the effect which this would have upon the negotiations. However, it was agreed by the State Department representatives that they will request Messrs. Bohlen and Nitze to raise this proposition with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at their meeting on Wednesday (yesterday). We have not yet heard the outcome of any such discussion by the State and the JCS.

[Redacted Signature]

FRANK G. WISNER

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